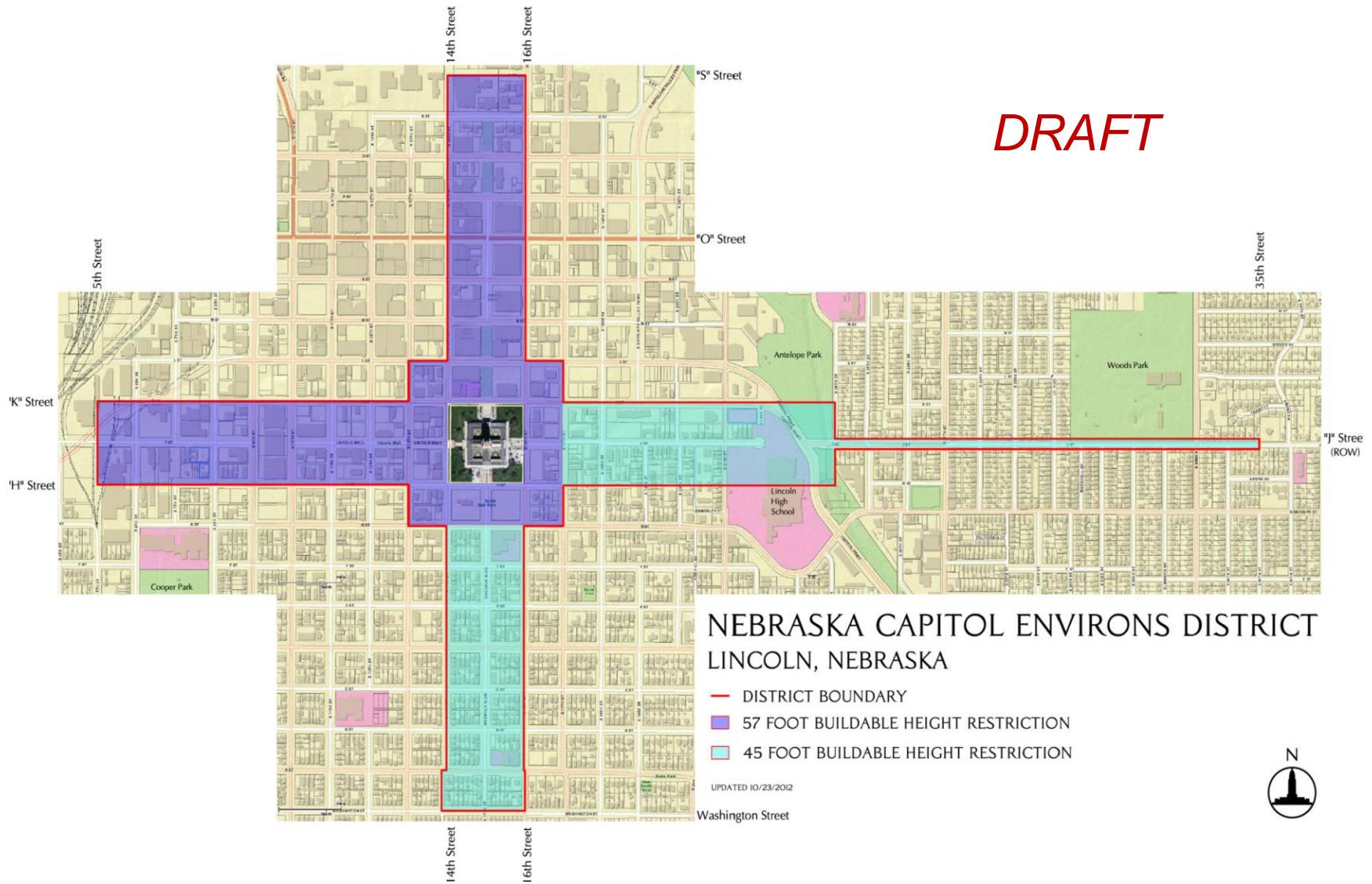


# Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission - *Annual Report 2014*



The Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission was established in 1988 to strengthen existing protections for the setting of Nebraska's landmark State Capitol. Commission membership of seven citizen volunteers includes five members appointed by the City of Lincoln and two appointed by the State of Nebraska.

Membership in 2014 remained unchanged, namely Jeff Searcy continuing as chair, Christine Dionisopoulos, John Kay, Tom Laging, Karen Nalow, Cecil Steward, and Jon Weinberg. The seven appointed citizen members are assisted by three *ex officio* members--Bob Ripley of the Office of the Capitol Commission (for the State of Nebraska), Marvin Krout (director,

Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department), and Lynn Johnson (director, Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department). Staffing is provided by the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department.

The Commission is required to meet at least quarterly by Section 27.56.060 of the Lincoln Municipal Code. The Commission met nine times through October—in January, February, March, April, June, July, August, September, and October. The annual joint meeting with the Capitol Commission is scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> and a December meeting will be held if necessary.

## ***Nebraska's Centennial Mall (Centennial Mall, K Street to R Street)***

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Continued, substantial progress on rebuilding Nebraska's Centennial Mall was a headline of 2014 in the Capitol Environs. The complicated process of rebuilding the intersections of the Mall and the east-west streets, while maintaining east-west traffic, has been accomplished at most of the intersections and substantial construction has begun on the K-L and L-M park blocks.

The north blocks (P-Q and Q-R) are scheduled for construction in 2015, with substantial completion expected by the end of that year, with some planting occurring in 2016.

A fruitful conversation was held with Public Works Dept. staff regarding the traffic signal arms that extend into vistas to the Capitol. A mutually acceptable concept was developed to improve visual corridor at a modest overall cost and funds are being sought to accomplish the proposal.

The Commission reviewed inscriptions for the Spirit of Nebraska Pathway and formed an editorial committee to assist with that detailed process. Several dozen inscriptions have been approved, with many more in process honoring a broad spectrum of Nebraska people and organizations.

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## 1220 Lincoln Mall Building

Farmers Mutual Insurance Company followed up completion of its handsome new headquarters at South 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Lincoln Mall with a plans to renovate the former headquarters at 1220 Lincoln Mall, which the Commission readily approved. The renovation includes windows in the formerly windowless east façade, providing outstanding Capitol views. The construction is now underway.



*Approved Design  
from East*



*Approved Design  
from Northwest*

### ***III Landmark Centre (Lincoln Mall, 11<sup>th</sup> Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street)***

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Construction also continues on III Landmark Center, directly west of the Farmers Mutual Block. As promised, III Landmark Centre is similar in materials and overall design with I Landmark

Centre west of it, across 11<sup>th</sup> Street, but includes structured parking on the north half of the block, rather than surface parking

### ***Museum of Nebraska Renovation***

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In May, June and August, the Commission reviewed exterior changes to the Museum of Nebraska History of the Nebraska State Historical Society, located at Centennial Mall and P Street. The project will include major improvements to the

interior and mechanical systems, but also will create a welcoming new entry on Centennial Mall and an attractive new sign package.



*Approved Design  
from East*



## ***Residential Rehabilitations***

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In addition to the office projects more commonly seen in the Lincoln Mall and Centennial Mall areas of the Environs District, the Commission reviewed and approved two significant rehabilitation projects of existing downtown residential structures. Early in the year, the Commission reviewed a welcome and thorough rehabilitation apartments at 1421 P Street, adjacent to the west of the Museum of Nebraska History. That project is nearing completion. The Commission also reviewed and approved a redevelopment project for the President and the Ambassador apartments adjacent Capitol Square on Lincoln Mall. Largely an interior upgrade, the project will include restoration of the Art Deco canopy now missing from the east entrance of the President, as well as improving the courtyard between the buildings and the west alley adjacent to the Ambassador, benefitting Lincoln Mall.

The Commission recommended approval of a zoning application from representatives of Century House at 1201 Lincoln Mall to remove an obstacle to converting the second floor of that building from office space back to its original use as apartments. The proposed change would require the same parking standards in Capitol Environs as in the

underlying zoning districts. Planning Commission concurred with the Environs Commission by a unanimous vote on November 12, 2014 and the City Council will next consider the proposal.

Maintaining a variety of good quality housing units throughout the Environs District is among the goals of the Environs Commission



*President  
&  
Ambassador  
Courtyard  
Proposal*

## ***Goodhue Boulevard Monument***

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Near South Neighborhood Association proposed in September install a “precinct marker” or area monument near the A Street end of Goodhue Boulevard, identifying the neighborhood and

celebrating the contribution of Bertram Grosvner Goodhue. The overall concept was well received. The Association plans to return to the Commission in November with more information.



*Goodhue  
Monument  
concept*

*Respectfully submitted (preliminary), November 18, 2014  
Ed Zimmer, Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department*